



Resilience in an age of uncertainty

Cultivating resilient leaders,
teams, and organizations



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Resilience
matters
more
than ever



Executive Summary

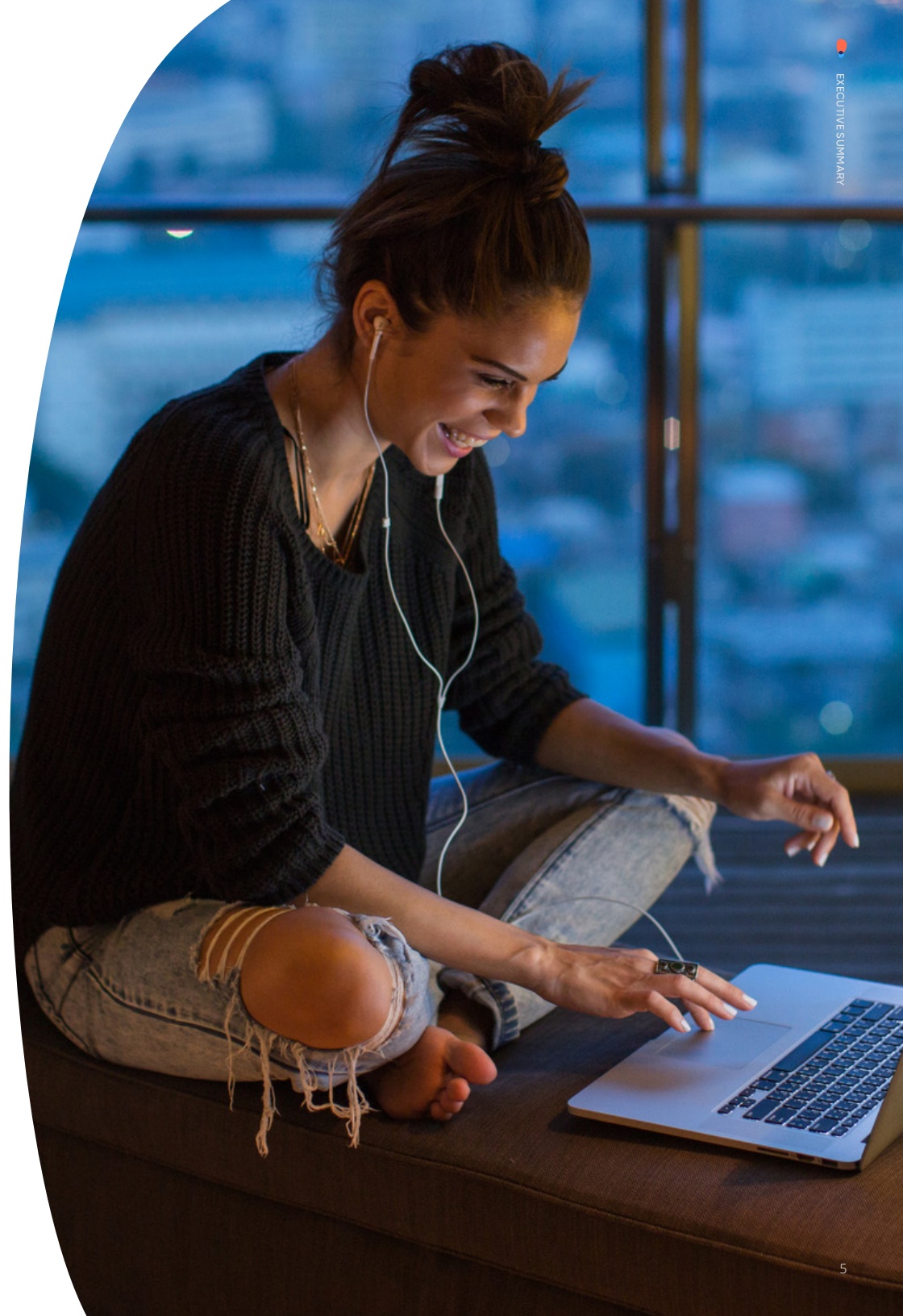
Resilience matters now more than ever.

Organizations are on a quest for resilience in the midst of a global pandemic. Resilience as a theme has trended many times over the past few decades, resurfacing during downturns and disruptions to remind us of its importance. In the past, however, the focus on resilience quickly waned as markets recovered and the well-intentioned blueprints for developing resilience were put aside, with organizations failing to see the long-term advantages of a resilient organization. What will be different this time?

For starters, we're experiencing adversity on a deeply human scale across the globe. Second, we are facing the stark realization that the future will very likely bring similar global threats—perhaps on an even greater scale of disruption than the current pandemic. Third, as evidenced by the headlines of companies stepping up to take a people-first approach during the pandemic, we are witnessing a corporate awakening to the human side of business.

Led by researchers at BetterUp Labs, we set out to help organizations seize this momentum to build resilience on a meaningful scale. We examine the power of resilience to not only weather the current challenges, but to grow stronger in the face of constant change. Our aim is to make resilience actionable and achievable by uncovering the tangible value of resilience and offering evidence-based strategies for organizations to reliably measure and develop workforce resilience.

Our data-driven findings and insights come from two core sources representing companies and professionals across the globe: 1) Data collected from representative samples of the U.S. professional population, referred to as the general population, and 2) data collected from our partner organizations, referred to as Member data. Together, this data set creates a unique, multifocal lens on resilience. It represents hundreds of organizations and tens of thousands of individuals working across a variety of industries and jobs—from young professionals just starting their careers, to mid-career parents moving into management, to seasoned senior leaders. What emerges from our study is a clear roadmap of what resilience is, why it's valuable, and what you can do to measure and cultivate it broadly in your organizations.



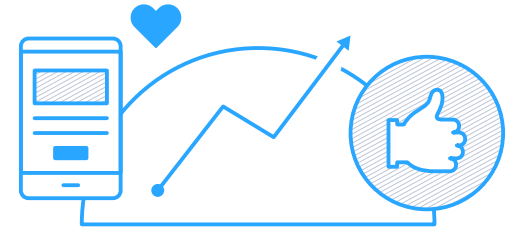
Key Findings

From these findings, a clear set of actionable and measurable strategies emerges for any organization. We strongly believe that with reliable data, proven evidence-based approaches, and a tangible business case, organizations are now equipped to build resilience at scale. Organizations that achieve their pursuit of resilience will not only navigate the current black swan events better than their competition, but also thrive through future waves of uncertainty.



Resilience is a hidden source of innovation for organizations

Our data reveals that innovation thrives where teams and leaders value and demonstrate resilience. In contrast, we see creativity falter in psychologically-fragile environments. As companies strive for innovation to achieve growth through challenging market conditions, this finding provides compelling evidence that highly-resilient individuals are an untapped source of creativity and ingenuity in the workforce.



Resilience protects and maintains productivity, wellbeing, and social connection

While the general population saw sharp declines in productivity, wellbeing, and social support during the pandemic, highly-resilient individuals showed significantly lower decreases across all three of these domains, and they also excelled in behaviors that are known to boost wellbeing and resilience, such as sleep, purpose, and staying active.



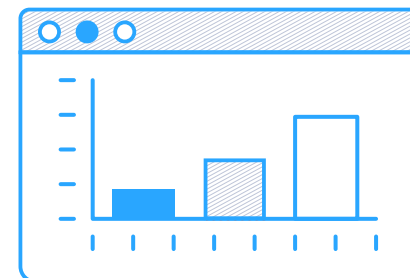
Resilient leaders have a multiplier effect on teams

Teams led by resilient leaders have almost three times higher resilience and experience significantly less burnout and turnover intention. Considering that frontline managers are responsible for leading up to two thirds of your workforce, the potential impact these leaders can have on your organization's culture and engagement is clearly significant.



The profile of resilience is uniquely human

A surprising and valuable finding is the uniquely human nature of the hallmark traits found in highly-resilient individuals. These individuals show strengths in their ability to collaborate, influence, and communicate effectively, adapt learning styles as needed, and demonstrate the psychological capacity for thriving as an ongoing pursuit, not simply one that is addressed only during crisis.



Resilience can be learned and measured

Our extensive dataset reveals new insights on how resilience can be reliably developed and measured with coaching as one of the most effective known interventions for building resilience. For example, a very encouraging finding is that individuals who start low on resilience see an average of 125% growth in resilience with just three to four months of coaching support. Our research also surfaces a set of mindsets and behaviors that accompany resilience to provide an expanded, multidimensional view of agility and adaptability in the workplace, creating the ability to index the resilience and innovation within an organization.

Introduction

Resilience is a dynamic capability that needs to be demystified at multiple levels—individual, team, and organization.



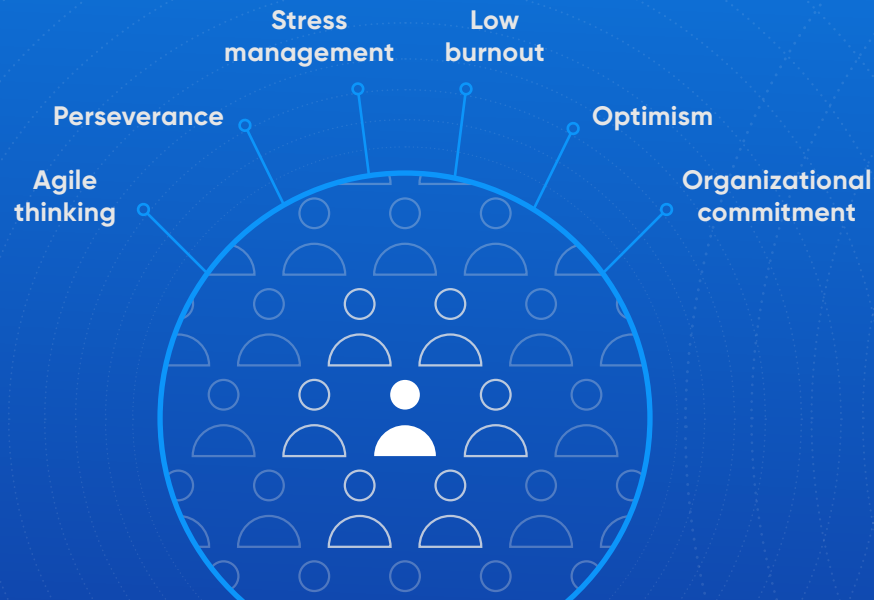
Across the globe, we are facing adversity

—from the daily struggle to maintain safe “socially-distanced” work and home lives to a changing economy that is causing whole industries to decay while others are overwhelmed and unable to meet market demands. Hidden within these challenges are opportunities for unparalleled growth, innovation, and positive change. Why are some individuals and organizations able to navigate uncertainty better than others and even emerge even stronger, more agile, and more successful? The answer is resilience.

What is resilience?

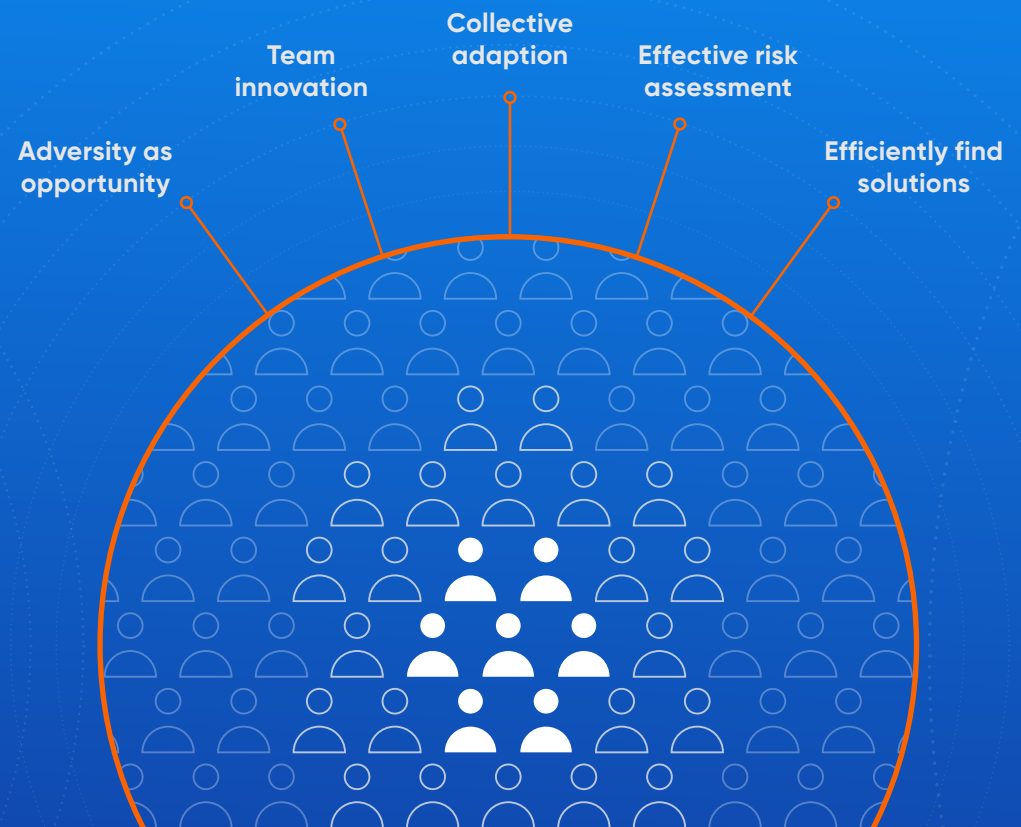
Resilience is often defined as an individual’s ability to bounce back from adversity. At BetterUp, we also believe that every challenge offers an opportunity for growth. As such, resilience encompasses both our ability to emerge from struggle without harm and also describes the potential for that struggle to catalyze growth. With this broadened definition, we begin to see why individuals, teams, and organizations alike can benefit greatly from building resilience in our current environment.





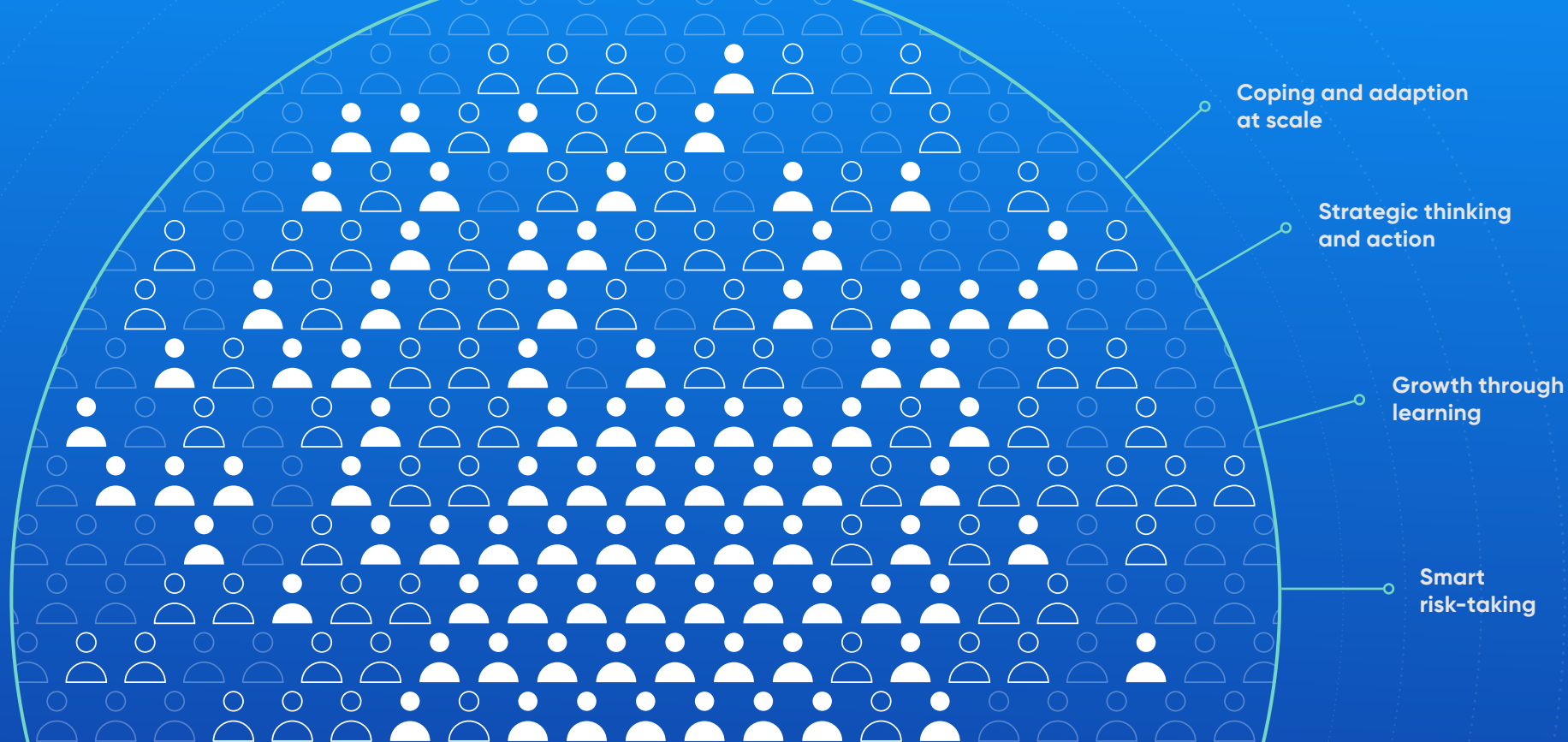
Individuals

As an individual, being resilient requires approaching challenges or setbacks with the appropriate mindset, as well as being skilled in behaviors that help to mitigate disruption. Resilience requires agile thinking and optimism, perseverance through changing contexts, and activation of effective coping strategies.



Teams

But resilience is not unique to individuals. Groups of people can also be characterized in terms of their levels of collective resilience. For example, just as individuals face adversity, teams also bump up against real-world challenges in the workplace. Such challenges could include poor interpersonal interactions, ineffective communications, rapidly-shifting priorities and projects, and weak organizational culture.



Organizations

Whereas less resilient teams might be rattled by such challenges, causing disruption to performance and productivity, resilient teams are able to see these stressors as opportunities to respond, adapt, and grow. Highly-resilient teams also make better assessments of risks that impact their work and more efficiently find solutions.

Like teams, organizations can be resilient. Organizational resilience focuses on the process of coping with and adapting to challenges and stressors, while positioning the organization to recover—and even grow—from such adversity. In uncertain or threatening environments, resilience is the key factor to whether an organization is able to move beyond a focus on basic survival to a focus on thriving.



- For individuals, teams, and organizations, becoming resilient is clearly no small task and it requires significant shifts in mindset and behavior. The task of cultivating resilience—especially at the team and organizational level—may seem daunting. And that’s because it can be.

In this study, our researchers at BetterUp Labs focus on answering four critical questions:

- 1** What is the value of resilience to your organization?
- 2** What are the drivers of individual and organizational resilience?
- 3** How can resilience be measured across your organization?
- 4** What strategies can your organization use to boost resilience?

Through our extensive research, that represents hundreds of organizations and tens of thousands of individuals working across a variety of industries and jobs, we were able to offer evidence-based insights and strategies for driving significant growth in resilience within your workforce and organization. And, as you will discover, the benefits of strengthening resilience are innumerable, for your people and your bottom line.

Global Pandemic: A real-world case study of human resilience

Resilience is the great protector and enabler
in challenging times.

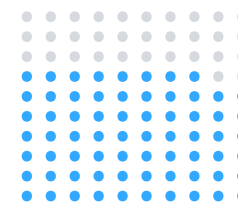


As a result of COVID-19, we are all participants in a real-time experiment, one that tests our ability to adapt in the face of extreme and abrupt changes to how we work and live. Our studies on both the general population and our partner organizations during the pandemic bring to light a data-driven view of the far-reaching impacts of adversity. However, our data highlights one massively valuable systematic advantage for individuals and their organizations: resilience.

Setting the stage: The human impact of extreme adversity

In early 2020, the world faced a global event unlike any other. As the severity of COVID-19 began to dramatically affect every aspect of work and life, individuals and organizations realized rapid changes were needed to adjust and adapt. These changes not only had a large impact on what work was done, but even how work was done.

Because we were tracking data before and during the pandemic, we've been able to see the downstream effect these changes have had on both worker productivity and wellbeing. We found that job productivity in the general population was massively unsettled with more than two-thirds of workers reporting that they experienced a major disruption to their productivity. We also saw that more than half of the population experienced a decline in wellbeing, showing that the pandemic is having a pervasive impact on our ability to thrive as individuals.



69%

Reported disruption
in productivity



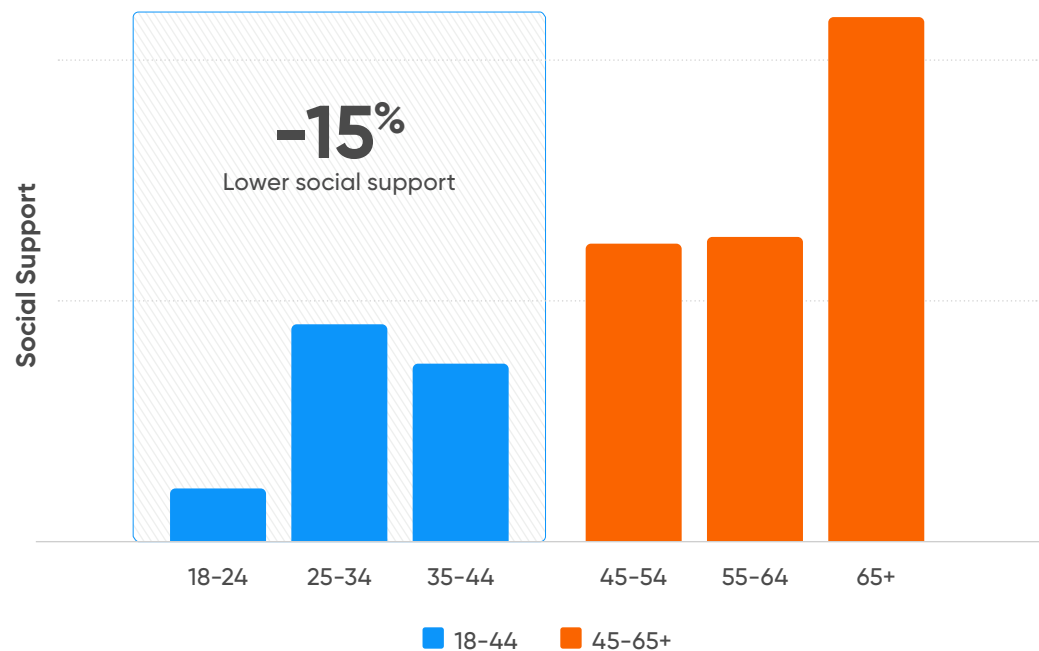
58%

Reported decline
in wellbeing

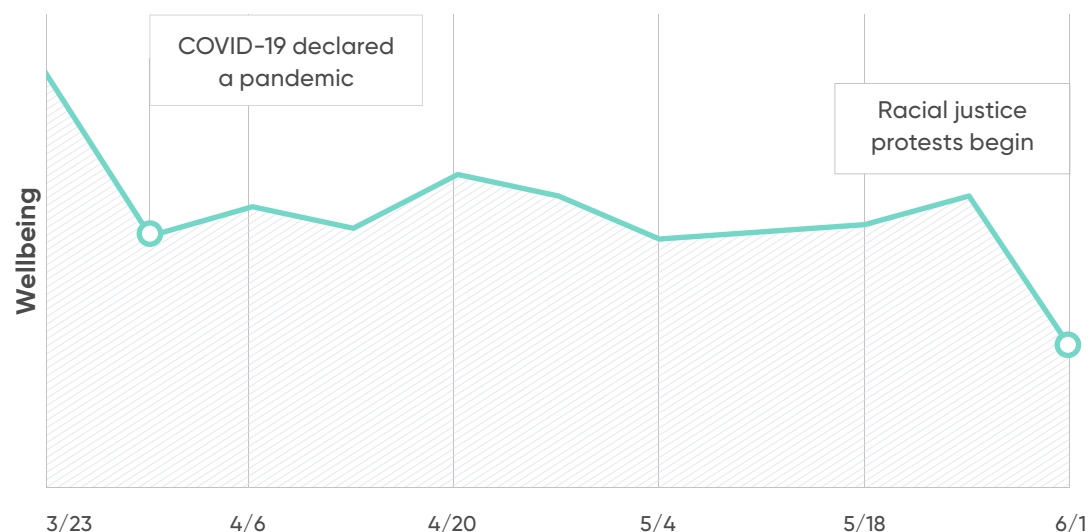
This disruption to productivity and wellbeing came as people were also feeling a significant decline in social connection and support, likely due to social distancing protocols. Within this data, we found that 18 to 24 year olds reported the largest decreases, suggesting this age group may have had weaker social connections to start with or struggled more to stay connected through social distancing. The younger generations are struggling more with social connection during COVID-19 than their older counterparts.

The story of how wellbeing has changed during this crisis, as told through our Member data, is quite remarkable. We saw a sharp decline in wellbeing at two key points in time: first, after the pandemic was officially declared and a second dip during the protests related to the Black Lives Matter movement. These immediate dips following disruptive and tragic events highlight how quickly our wellbeing can be affected and just how critical resilience might be in these moments. Concurrent with both the World Health Organization’s declaration of a global pandemic and the killing of George Floyd, we also saw two steep rises in the use of coaching for wellbeing, underscoring the need for—and value of—additional support in these types of critical moments.

Disruption to social connections during COVID-19



Wellbeing during pandemic



The resilience advantage: How do the resilient perform in a pandemic?

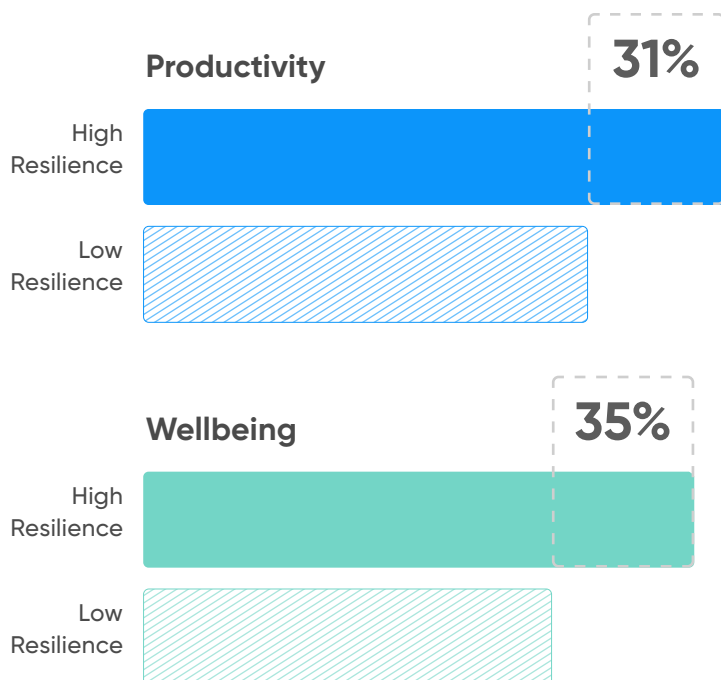
The definition of resilience suggests that those who possess it will fare better in times of distress. Studying highly-resilient individuals during extreme adversity revealed just how powerful the protective nature of resilience really is. Indeed, among those individuals who have the highest levels of resilience, we discovered buffering effects across three areas that are critical to performance: productivity, wellbeing, and social connection.



Protection against productivity loss

While we saw a decline in productivity across the general population, highly-resilient individuals experienced significantly less disruption. When comparing the most resilient workers with the least, we found a 31% difference in job productivity during the pandemic. Resilient workers have shown they are not only better prepared to manage and work through adversity, but they also are able to maintain their ability to contribute to the organization’s success despite disruption.

Productivity and wellbeing advantage for the highly resilient

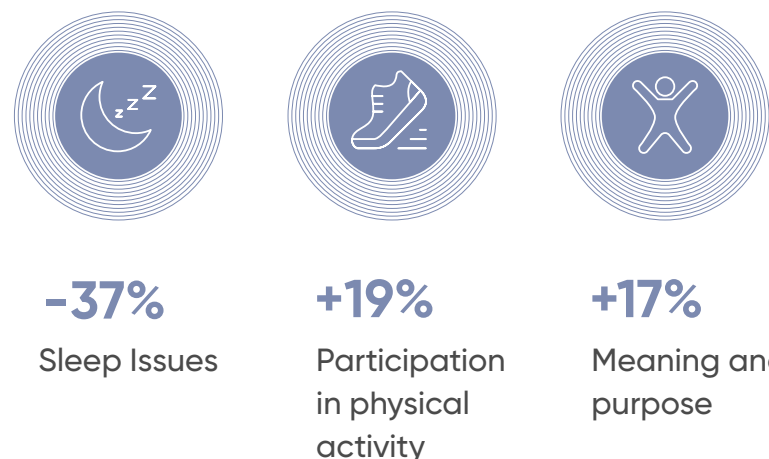


Preserving wellbeing

Decades of research have shown that wellbeing and resilience grow together, and in our research, the protective, or buffering, effects of resilience point to how strong that connection is. First and foremost, we found that highly-resilient workers reported 35% higher wellbeing than their less resilient colleagues.

The highly-resilient group also reported several other protective behaviors that we know are important contributors to wellbeing—sleep, physical activity, and a sense of meaning and purpose. These behaviors work together to drive a continuous, upward growth cycle. For example, sleep fuels wellbeing which will help bolster resilience and, in turn, this improved resilience helps one manage stress which can protect against sleep disruptions.

Protective factors for the highly resilient



Maintaining social support

Our past research demonstrates an important link between positive social ties and resilience. When your ability to connect with others is disrupted, your coping skills, adaptability, and wellbeing take a big hit. For this reason, the pandemic's negative impact on traditional social connections is a major concern for employee wellbeing and performance.

Across the general population, we found evidence of declining social support from friends during the pandemic. However, once again we were able to see the protective effects of resilience. For example, despite a drop in social support across the board, highly-resilient individuals maintained almost 40% more support from friends compared to their peers with the lowest resilience. Individuals with the highest resilience during the start of the pandemic also showed 18% higher social connection than individuals with the lowest resilience, demonstrating they had a stronger ability to maintain the social ties in the face of disruption to normal socialization opportunities.



I Social support from colleagues



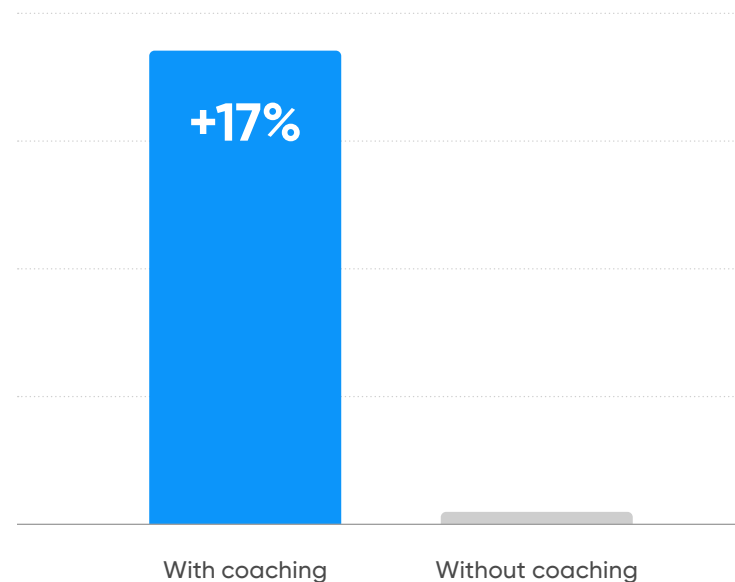
Together, these findings demonstrate that resilience is powerful at protecting individuals from the impact of adversity, even the extreme conditions of the current pandemic. The resilient remain more productive, more socially connected, and stronger in the habits that promote wellbeing, such as exercise, quality sleep, and finding meaning and purpose.

From surviving to thriving: Can we grow amidst crisis?

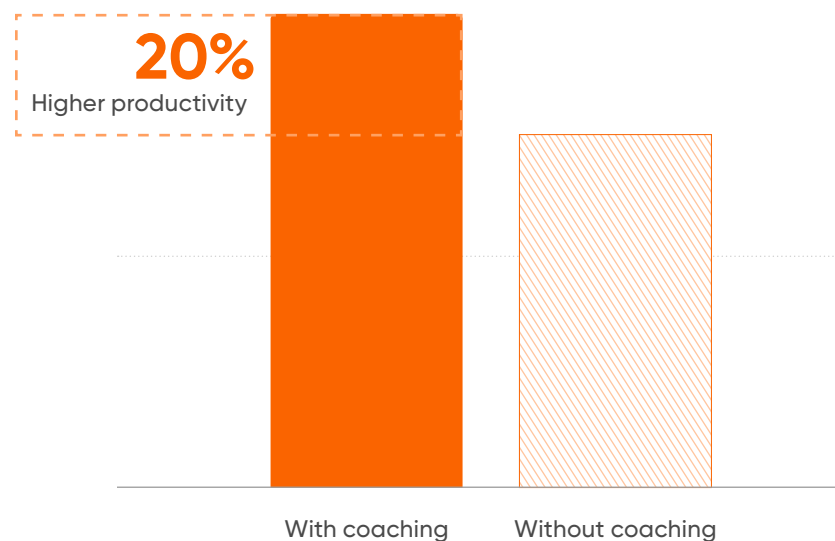
Studying resilience in a pandemic creates a unique opportunity to observe whether and how individuals can grow in a crisis. We tracked and compared BetterUp Members with full-time employees in the general population who were not receiving coaching. We found that individuals can experience significant growth even through crisis when they are actively supported. For example, BetterUp Members actively engaged in coaching during the pandemic experienced a 17% increase in resilience, and almost 20% higher job productivity, than individuals who were not receiving coaching during this same time period.

Our extensive database that tracks Member growth over time offers additional insights to what enables this growth in resilience. Our studies show that the top driver of resilience is the ability to regulate one's emotions. Emotional regulation drives 25% of the growth in resilience. Self-compassion, or an appreciation for allowing yourself time and space to work through challenges, contributes to 13% of growth in resilience. Cognitive agility, the ability to quickly update and adapt one's thinking, accounts for 12% of the growth in resilience. These three areas are the very skills necessary to cope with difficult emotions and remain adaptable in challenging times, which in turn bolsters growth in resilience.

I Growth in Resilience



I Productivity during COVID-19



I Top three drivers of resilience growth*



Emotional regulation

The extent to which we regulate our emotions to remain calm and collected. The more emotionally stable we are, the better equipped we are to remain resilient and excel when challenges arise.¹



Self-compassion

The extent to which we are compassionate towards ourselves, treating ourselves with kindness and empathetic understanding. The more accepting we are of ourselves, the greater life satisfaction and resilience we experience.²



Cognitive agility

The extent to which we adapt and shift our thought processes when doing so leads to more positive outcomes. Learning to make plans while allowing for flexibility is an important skill for mental well-being and productivity.³

Key Insights

1. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, wellbeing across the population has dropped, but highly-resilient individuals have been protected against the worst declines.
2. Highly-resilient individuals manage stress by leading a healthy lifestyle, finding meaning and purpose, and by connecting with others. This investment is paying off now with less disruption to work productivity and greater wellbeing.
3. Individuals can develop resilience amidst crises when they are actively supported. Increasing emotional regulation, self-compassion, and cognitive agility are the top three drivers of growth in resilience.

* The top three drivers were identified amongst a broader set of assessment items in BetterUp's Whole Person Assessment (WPA). See appendix for more information about the WPA.

¹ Zaccaro, S. J. (2001). The nature of executive leadership: A conceptual and empirical analysis of success. Washington, DC: APA Books.

² Tugade, M. M., & Fredrickson, B. L. (2007). Regulation of positive emotions: Emotion regulation strategies that promote resilience. *Journal of happiness studies*, 8(3), 311-333.

³ Neff, K. D. & Germer, C. (2017). Self-Compassion and Psychological Wellbeing. In J. Doty (Ed.) *Oxford Handbook of Compassion Science*, Ch. 27. Oxford University Press.

The Value of Resilience

Resilience is good for people, good for teams, and good for business.

In our research, we set out to uncover the tangible value of resilience to help organizations bolster the business case for investing in resilience. Indeed, we found very compelling evidence that resilience has value at multiple levels—for individuals, teams, and organizations.



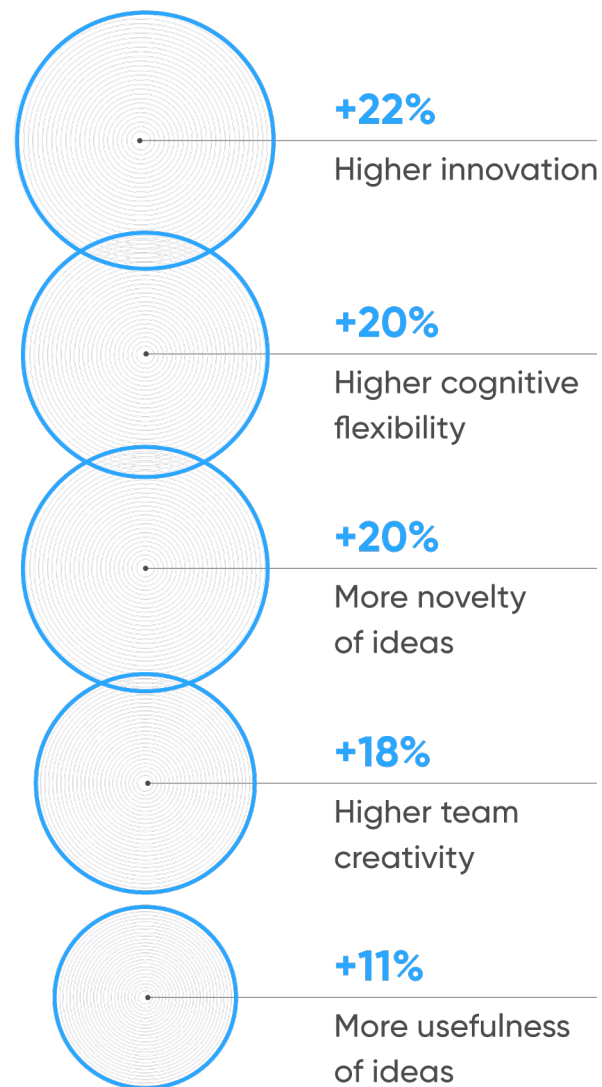
Resilient individuals innovate and outperform

Employees with greater resilience bring their best selves to their jobs every day. We found that the most resilient employees have almost 20% higher cognitive flexibility and a more robust growth mindset compared to their peers with the lowest resilience. One of the most valuable findings in our study is that the most resilient workers are also the most innovative ones, with 22% higher innovation scores. This is a crucial finding as organizations seek to adapt and innovate to emerge as market leaders in a post-pandemic world.

In particular, we find that highly-resilient workers surpass their peers in finding new uses for existing products and processes. In a study of U.S. professionals, we looked at novelty and utility, the two defining characteristics of creativity, and found that highly-resilient employees outperform in both. This may explain why we also discovered that highly-resilient individuals are good at finding gaps and identifying products and processes to meet those needs, thus amplifying their impact across the organization. In short, your resilient employees may be your greatest source of innovation.

The ability to manage, cope, and adapt to adversity comes with tangible monetary advantages, too. Our data shows that those individuals with the highest levels of resilience have 22% greater annual income than those with the lowest levels of resilience. While resilience doesn't accelerate the timeline to receive a title promotion, it is associated with an increased frequency of financial promotions.

Resilience creates an innovation advantage



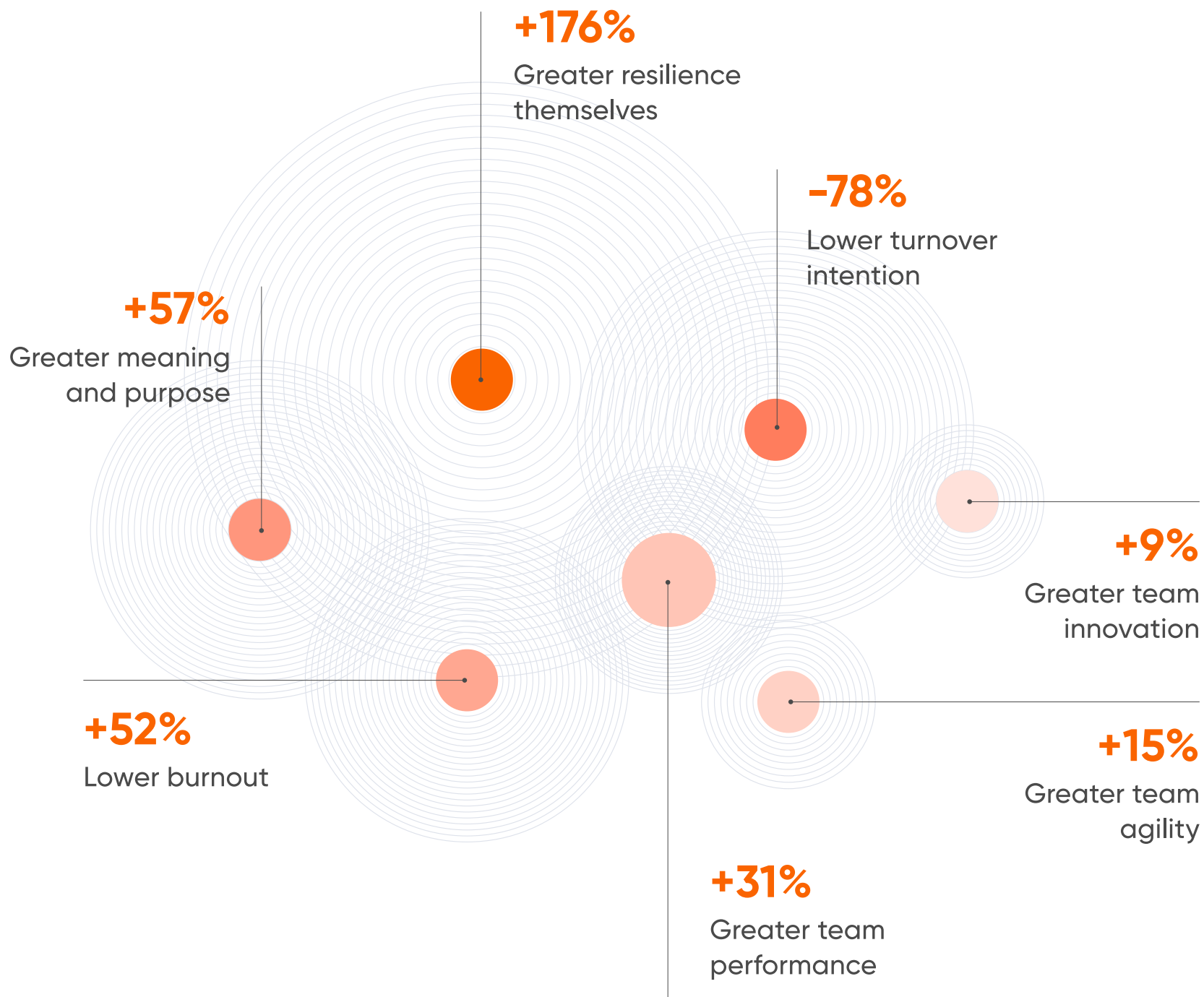


Resilient leaders build resilient teams

In the new climate of distributed, remote, and asynchronous work, what it means for individuals and teams to work together toward a common goal looks wildly different than it once did. If your organization hopes to remain adaptive and thrive through ongoing and uncertain challenges, it will need to build resilience at the core. And, as our research shows, your managers will need to play a pivotal role in this mission.

In the current environment, frontline managers—even when they cultivate seemingly small, incremental behavior changes—can have an outsized effect across your organization. Across our Members, we see that resilience in leaders has a multiplier effect on teams. For example, how well a leader copes with challenges is predictive of how well the team members of that leader fare. Specifically, direct reports of highly-resilient team leaders report 2.7 times greater resilience than direct reports of leaders low in resilience. But the gains are not limited to resilience. Highly-resilient team leaders also have direct reports who experience 52% less burnout and have 78% lower intention of leaving the organization.

Resilient leadership also drives performance advantages for your organization. When we asked the direct reports of these highly-resilient team leaders to evaluate their teams, we found that their teams have higher overall performance, are more agile, and are more innovative than individuals who work with team leaders with low resilience. This is a clear demonstration of the cascading, group-level impacts that highly-resilient leaders have on their teams.



Resilient organizations have stronger financial health

Organizations that embrace resilience at the core enjoy better financial health. In a study of publicly-traded BetterUp customers, we examined their most recent public financial data along with Member data of approximately 1,500 individuals. We found that the companies with the highest aggregated resilience scores have had 42% higher annual return on assets and 3.7x higher annual return on equity.

Furthermore, when we examined growth in resilience, the organizations that experienced the highest increases in workforce resilience showed higher levels of financial growth in the past year. These companies have had 3.2x greater year-over-year revenue growth and 60% higher five-year revenue growth. In other words, companies that choose to invest in a more resilient workforce experience a greater impact on their organization's bottom line.



The business benefits of investing in workforce resilience is clear

—greater worker productivity and motivation, more innovative and effective teams, and financial growth for your company. A more resilient workforce is also best prepared for what promises to be the new normal: an ongoing need for all businesses to adapt to continual paradigm shifts.



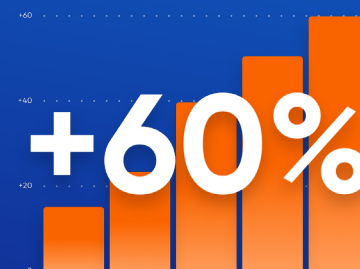
Higher annual return on assets



Year-over-year revenue growth



Higher annual return on equity



Five year revenue growth

Key Insights

1. Resilient individuals excel at the mindsets and behaviors that drive innovation, making them your greatest source of innovation.
2. Resilient leaders influence the resilience of others on their teams and throughout the organization, amplifying their impact.
3. Individuals and organizations with high resilience are, on average, better off financially.

The Profile of Resilience

The hallmark traits of the highly resilient are uniquely human, calling for greater focus in developing the cognitive mindsets and behaviors of the workforce.

As we've seen so far, our findings suggest that highly-resilient individuals, teams, and organizations have superior outcomes in wellbeing, productivity, and even financial success. But what does a highly-resilient leader actually look like? Their skills, aptitudes, and qualities can serve as a model from which to learn.

Our extensive data set enables us to create a unique profile of the highly-resilient professional. The hallmarks of resilient professionals turn out to be human capabilities that transcend role and time, signaling to companies that building enduring mindsets and behaviors are needed in addition to, or even ahead of, reskilling a workforce in technical or functional areas.



MANAGEMENT BY TIME

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
Project A							
Project B							
Project C							
Project D							
Project E							
Project F							
Project G							
Project H							
Project I							
Project J							

The hallmarks of resilient professionals

Strong collaborators, influencers, and communicators

Highly-resilient leaders demonstrate strong interpersonal communication skills and connections. Specifically, employees with greater resilience bring 16% higher expression of empathy, have 16% greater perspective-taking abilities, and are 12% more effective in building and maintaining social connections in the workplace—all skills necessary for effective collaboration, influence, and communication across an organization.

Resilient leaders invest in relationships



+16% Expression of empathy



+16% Perspective-taking abilities

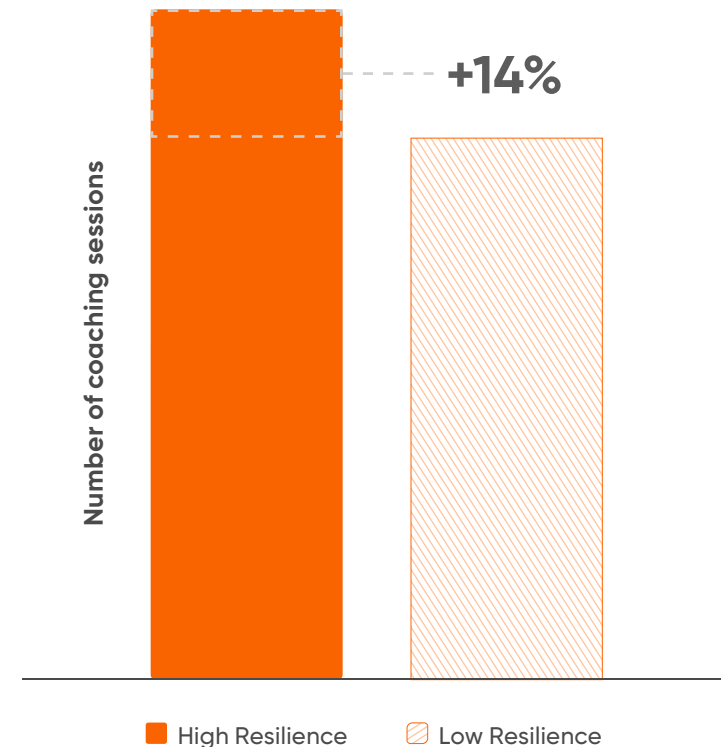


+12% Building and maintaining social connections

Agile and committed learners

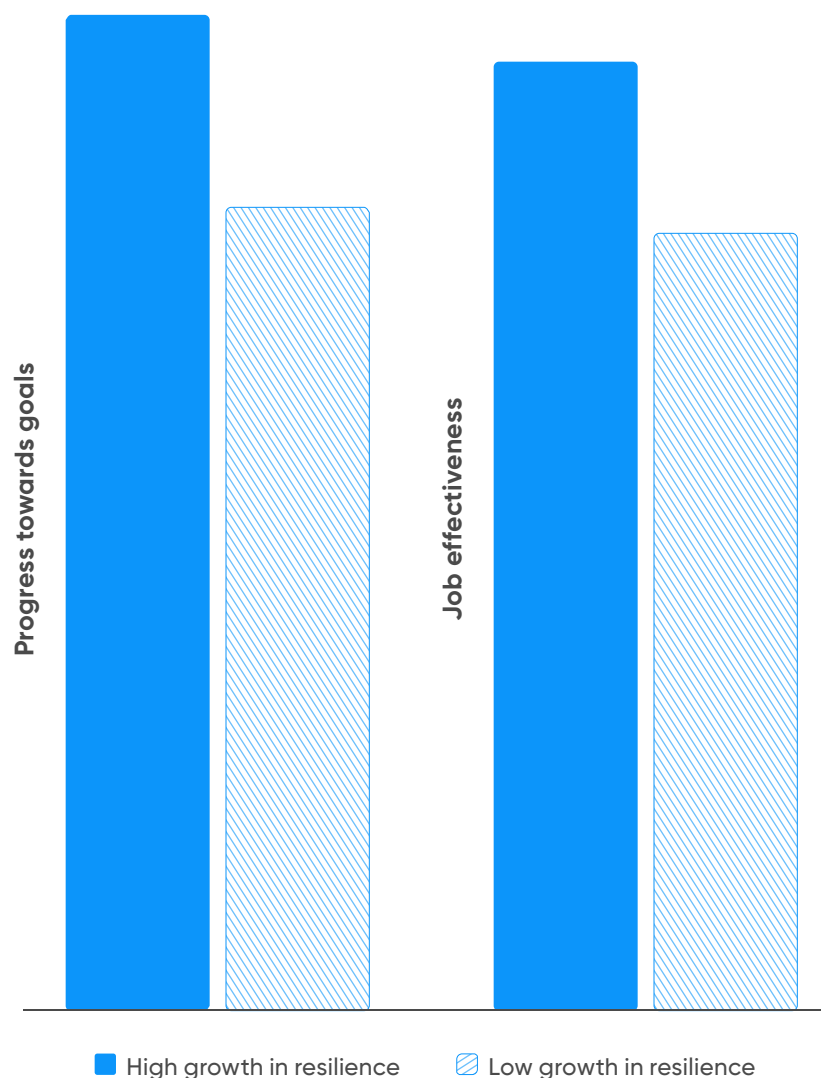
Across our BetterUp Members, we see that the most resilient leaders are also committed learners. Resilient leaders engage in 14% more coaching sessions and tend to have a stronger relationship with their coach.

Level of engagement in coaching



As a result, we see that those leaders whose resilience grows the most during their coaching engagement are also those who make greater progress toward their goals and report higher levels of effectiveness on the job.

I Growth in resilience drives progress

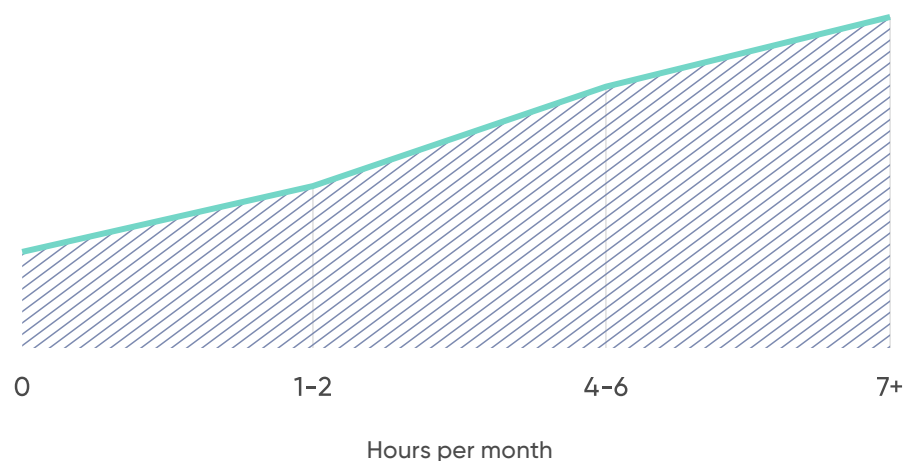


⁴ Vanhove et al., 2016

Compared to their peers, professionals who spend 7–9 hours a month on coaching or other personal development activities display the highest levels of resilience. For most individuals, this means spending 1–2 hours a week focused on discovering and developing mindsets and skills that will reduce stress and change ineffective coping behaviors—reducing stress while limiting productivity losses, inefficiencies, and ineffectiveness. Independent reports have found that one-on-one coaching and mentoring are two of the most effective ways to build and support resilience.⁴

But quantity is not the only differentiator. We also see differences in how coaching is used. In general, the topics that professionals care about have been shifting since the start of the global pandemic. Historically, the top two topics in coaching sessions have been career development and communication. Yet, after the pandemic began, the top two topics became wellbeing and communication, pointing to professionals proactively seeking support to regain—or grow—feelings of wellbeing during stressful times.

I Coaching leads to higher resilience



Having high resilience means recognizing the value in developing stress management skills in times of relative calm as well as times of struggle.

Proactive stress and burnout managers

A surprising pattern of stress management emerged in highly-resilient individuals during the pandemic. Interestingly, there was no change in how much they were working on stress management with their coach before or during the pandemic. In other words, having high resilience means recognizing the value in developing stress management skills in times of relative calm as well as times of struggle. Resilient leaders aren't thrown off by crisis; instead, they activate an already-practiced skill.



But, who fits this profile?

Across our studies, we found that a highly-resilient worker is more likely to be someone who is a manager, has longer tenure with an organization, manages a large team, and reports high responsibility for their team members.

Based on this profile, it would be easy to conclude that developing resilience actually requires more work or life experience. We might assume, for example, that more life experiences and leadership experiences give a person the opportunity to develop resilience.

But the data tells another story. It's not that all managers or long-tenured employees show resilience. Rather, it's the leaders who excel in the human skills outlined above who show the greatest resilience.⁵ It seems that resilient individuals may be more likely to advance through organizations, become managers, accrue tenure, and become trusted as leaders of larger teams because of their resilience and the hallmark traits they exhibit. In fact, managers and high-potential employees report the highest resilience of any workers in an organization, with 8% and 10% higher resilience than non-managers or non-high-potential employees, respectively. This suggests that businesses value and reward high resilience, making it a critical driver of career advancement.

I Image of highly-resilient individual



Key Insights

1. **Effective communication and collaboration are key skills of leaders with high resilience.**
2. **Resilient talent utilizes coaching and other development resources more effectively and more frequently.**
3. **Highly-resilient professionals tend to be managers with large teams, longer tenure at an organization, and with high responsibility for their team members.**

⁵ While there was no linear relationship between resilience and age, those in the generations representing 45- to 64-year-old professionals had higher resilience than other generations. Life experience likely does play a role in increasing the likelihood of learning the skills necessary to be resilient.

A multidimensional view of resilience at work

When amplified by mindsets and behaviors that promote agility and adaptability, resilience can unlock massive potential for organizations.





If organizations are ships at sea, the resilient are those with heavy ballast. In a storm, they may heal and list with the waves, but self-right quickly. But, while staying afloat through challenging seas is requisite, it does not in and of itself advance a ship on its journey. It is in this spirit that we moved beyond studying resilience at an individual level to understand what it takes for organizations to nimbly navigate the turbulence of the seas and chart a new course out of the storm. Demystifying this capability, that is often portrayed as aspirational and only achievable by a critical few, can unlock massive potential for organizations across every industry.

Through an extensive study of 18,000 working professionals, we identified a broader set of behaviors, mindsets, and skills that enable an organization to emerge from challenging situations stronger, more agile, and able to find new paths to success. The result of this work offers a framework for organizations to measure resilience at the enterprise level and use data to create a customized plan that will enable greater precision, and ultimately, higher business outcomes.

In our research, we found seven key behaviors, mindsets, and outcomes that capture a comprehensive picture of both resilience and the ability to thrive through adversity across teams and organizations. These dimensions were isolated from an extensive and comprehensive set of mindsets, behaviors, and outcomes in the BetterUp Whole Person Assessment.⁶ Together, the seven dimensions create a reliable way to measure resilience and innovation at the organizational level, the Resilience Innovation Index (RiX).

The graphic features the title 'The Resilience Innovation Index (RiX)' centered within a large blue circle. This circle is surrounded by several concentric, thin orange circles, creating a layered effect. The background of the entire right side of the page is a solid blue color.

The **Resilience Innovation Index (RiX)**



Resilience

Positively adapting in the context of negative or stressful experiences.



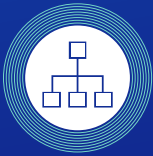
Cognitive Agility

Adapting and shifting thought processes when the situation calls for it.



Problem Solving

Solving difficult problems creatively and strategically by collecting pertinent information, developing an informed strategy, and identifying the optimal path forward.



Strategic Planning

Pragmatically thinking through ways to achieve future goals.



Encouraging Participation

Actively encouraging the participation and engagement of everyone on the team to promote a diverse and cohesive workgroup.



Empathy

Making deeper connections to understand the perspectives and experiences of others.



Empowerment

Enabling others to make decisions and control how they manage their work.

Those with higher RiX
also display these traits:



A measure of organizational agility and adaptability

Collectively, the seven dimensions in RiX can tell us how professionals in a workforce adapt their thinking and actions to cope with and adapt to today's challenges, prepare for evolving and emerging challenges of tomorrow, and understand the perspectives of others to best deal with stressful situations. Additionally, these dimensions assess how leaders help their teams resourcefully solve problems and manage tough challenges, build agility, and foster diverse voices to address adversity.

Individuals who score high on the RiX have higher productivity at work and better job performance. They also feel greater satisfaction with their jobs and even more favorably endorse their employers. These individuals also help to foster better communities in the workplace with greater feelings of belonging among their colleagues.

Ensuring organizational success despite immense challenge requires strong resilience. But that resilience must be combined with the behaviors that help organizations thrive. Resilience should be in service of embracing pivots in the business, strategic problem solving, rallying around new ways of work, supporting each other, and finding opportunity amid struggle. At the organizational level, these seven mindsets and behaviors strengthen a company's ability to successfully navigate uncertainty and adversity. Focusing on improving the dimensions of RiX leads to outcomes that matter to your business.

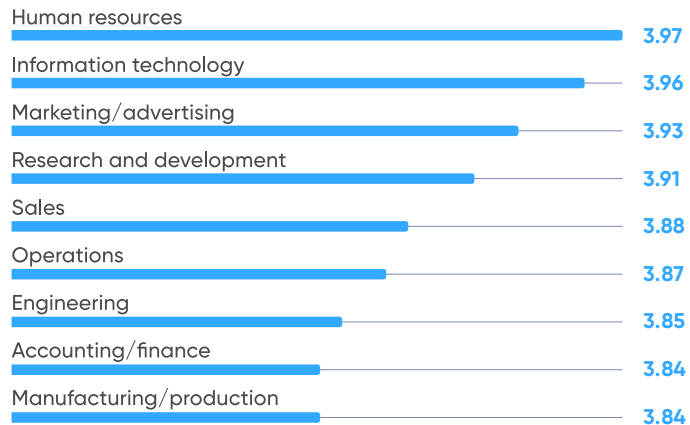
Industry and job comparisons

As a part of our research on RiX, we discovered that some industries are more vulnerable than others to low RiX. We found that employees in Information Services as well as Computer and Electronics Hardware showed the highest RiX scores, while workers in the Insurance and Government and Public Sector industries ranked at the bottom of all RiX scores. These differences highlight that industries under consistent pressures to stay agile in order to stay competitive may attract more resilient individuals. Alternatively, these differences may indicate that the constant demand for agility is a forcing function to develop all the RiX dimensions. Industries with more of an orientation toward stability may not attract those same individuals or cultivate those same skills.

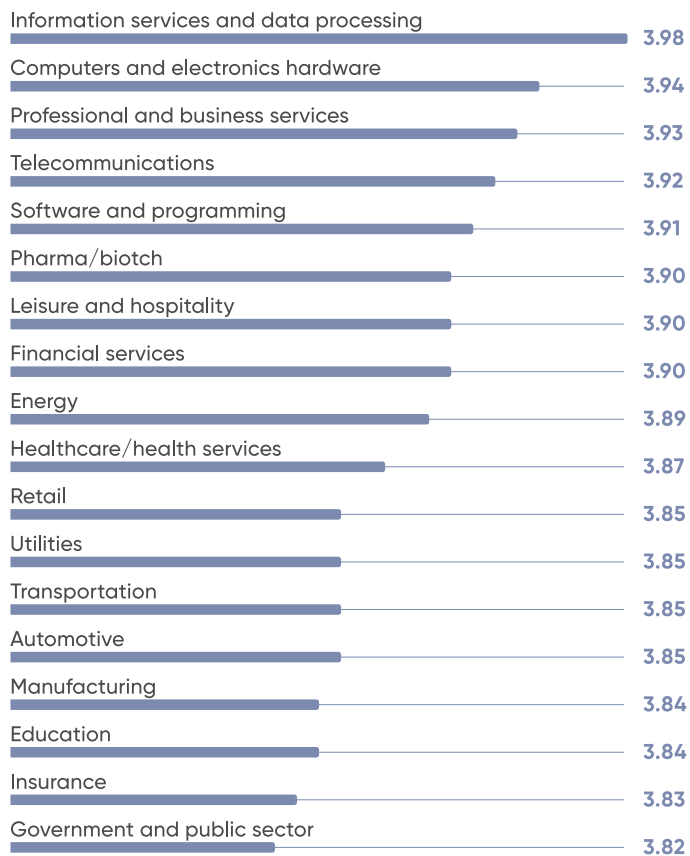
RiX also varies across job functions. Certain functions may inherently create more opportunity to grow in the seven dimensions of RiX. We find that Human Resources professionals display the highest RiX levels, suggesting that the very people responsible for maintaining the productivity, wellbeing, and development of a workforce are the ones who have to be the most resilient or who value self-development of resilience the most. Conversely, we find those in Manufacturing and Production have the lowest RiX scores, again pointing to a resilience gap for roles that often require more consistency and do not have as much exposure to workplace change and adaptation.

Looking at the RiX results across both industries and job functions, the data suggests that the least prepared for crisis or disruption may be those from industries or job functions where change is infrequent. When providing resources and support in your organization, it is important to attend to these more susceptible populations to help strategically grow resilience across your workforce.

RIX by function



RIX by industry



Revenue growth

Organizations that invest in growing RiX—and grow the most—are the same organizations that have high year-over-year revenue growth. Those organizations that grow the most in RiX across employees have 3.3x higher revenue growth year over year than organizations that grow the least in RiX. This finding showcases the value in evaluating RiX and demonstrates a compelling business case for investing in resilience.

Biggest growth in RiX

+3.3X Revenue Growth



The powerful advantage of measurement

A data-driven approach enables more precise identification of troublespots and the ability to target your efforts in the most effective way to drive higher outcomes. RiX introduces the capability to benchmark, monitor, and track progress toward building a more adaptive workforce. This emergent index, currently in use at Fortune 100 companies, is helping CHROs get ongoing and time-sensitive insight which helps them stay responsive to the changing needs of their workforce as the current pandemic unfolds.

For example, in one organization, the Strategic Planning dimension of RiX, which focuses on envisioning desired future states and identifying the steps needed to turn those desires into reality, has taken a hit during this pandemic. This dimension enables an organization to move from a reactive stance to a future-focused one. The organization's response to this insight is helping the workforce reconnect to the company's mission and supporting leaders to chart a path to achieving its mission in constantly changing conditions.

Another organization is experiencing a dip in the Empowerment dimension of RiX, signaling that employees are struggling to effectively adapt to new ways of working. This organization is responding by supporting leaders in cultivating autonomous, empowered teams in a remote working environment, which for some companies is not just a temporary situation, but a welcomed transition to the future of work.

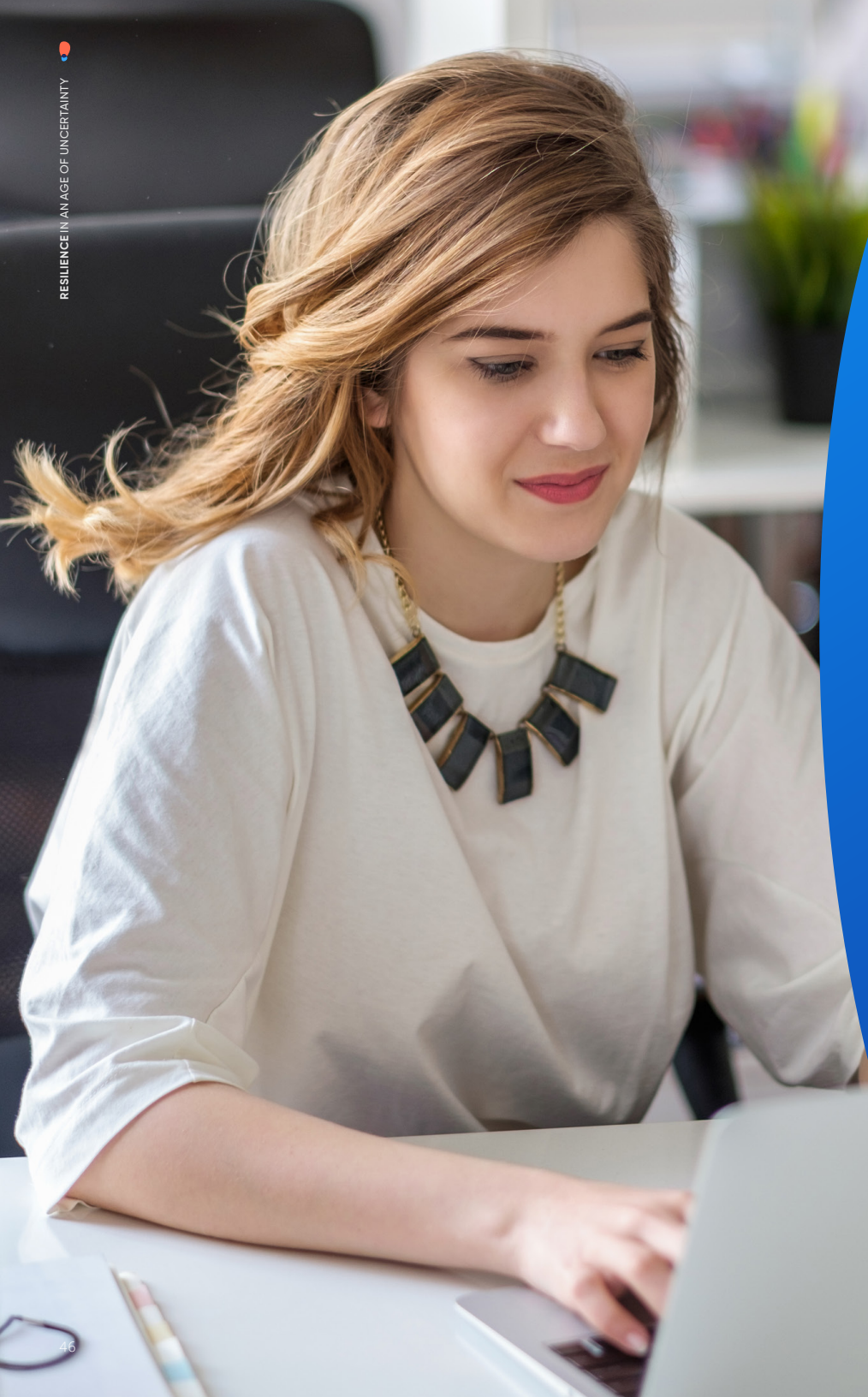
As a final example, many organizations are struggling with the Problem Solving dimension of RiX, which refers to strategically solving difficult problems by using creativity and the collective efforts of a team. Our measure of Problem Solving also reflects a willingness to get outside of convention and take risks to create the best solutions. These organizations are responding by helping leaders create the psychological safety to take risks and foster inclusion to drive increased creativity.

These are just a few examples of how a data-driven approach with reliable measurement can be used to gain insights and customize the approach for growth in an organization. The seven dimensions of RiX offer a framework to measure resilience in service of innovation, giving organizational leaders the transparency they need to take actions that will lead to the highest impact tailored to their culture and needs.

Key Insights

1. RiX is a multidimensional assessment of the behaviors, skills, and mindsets individuals need to thrive through adversity and bolster the resilience of their teams and the broader organization.
2. RiX is composed of seven subdimensions: Resilience, Cognitive Agility, Strategic Planning, Empathy, Problem Solving, Empowerment, and Encouraging Others.
3. Organizations that grow the most in RiX across employees have higher revenue growth, demonstrating a tangible business case for resilience.
4. A data-driven approach creates deep visibility into needs and priorities and enables the level of customization required to increase effectiveness.





Cultivating Resilience

Decades of research provide mounting evidence that workforce resilience is achievable, and organizations now have a data-driven roadmap for success.

Fifty years of resilience research has already demonstrated that resilience can be taught, and taught well, to people of all ages. Many early resilience interventions focused on children and teenagers. In the last twenty years, with the help of investments from the U.S. Department of Defense which seeks to protect soldiers from psychological harm in battle, the largest resilience training programs were developed and tested for adults. Through our own experience developing thousands of professionals around the world every year, we consistently and reliably find that growth in resilience is achievable.

For example, a remarkable and encouraging finding is that professionals who start with a low baseline in resilience can double their growth in just three to four months of coaching. We also consistently see significant gains across the top three drivers of growth in resilience—emotional regulation, self-compassion, and cognitive agility.

I Growth with 3-4 months of coaching

+125%

Resilience

+88%

Emotion regulation

+75%

Cognitive agility

+72%

Self-compassion

Through our collective studies, it is clear that organizations can and should build workforce resilience. But what actions should organizations take to seize this opportunity for growth?

TAKE ACTION:

Five strategies to build workforce resilience

The key findings in this report point to five focus areas to make resilience achievable for any organization:



Promote wellbeing at all levels.

Resilience and wellbeing grow together and act as a powerful buffer, or protection, against adversity. Reevaluate your enterprise wellbeing strategy to promote a holistic approach that includes mental, social, emotional, and physical support.



Foster a culture of resilience through your leaders.

Resilient leaders build resilient teams with greater agility and performance, and reduced burnout. Cultivate resilient leaders on the front lines to create a tipping point for change.



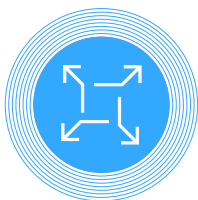
Model after the profile of high resilience.

Highly-resilient leaders exhibit a set of hallmark characteristics that are uniquely human. Apply these characteristics across the talent lifecycle to boost resilience in your organization.



Make change personal.

Effective strategies are highly individualized, evidence-based, and driven by data with a longer tail of support than most training programs can provide. Reevaluate your learning and development strategy to enable the one-to-one support that can drive deep and lasting change.



Take resilience out of the mystery box.

Resilience can be reliably measured and indexed. Get an understanding of how resilient your organization is today, and continuously pulse to track growth over time.

Promote wellbeing

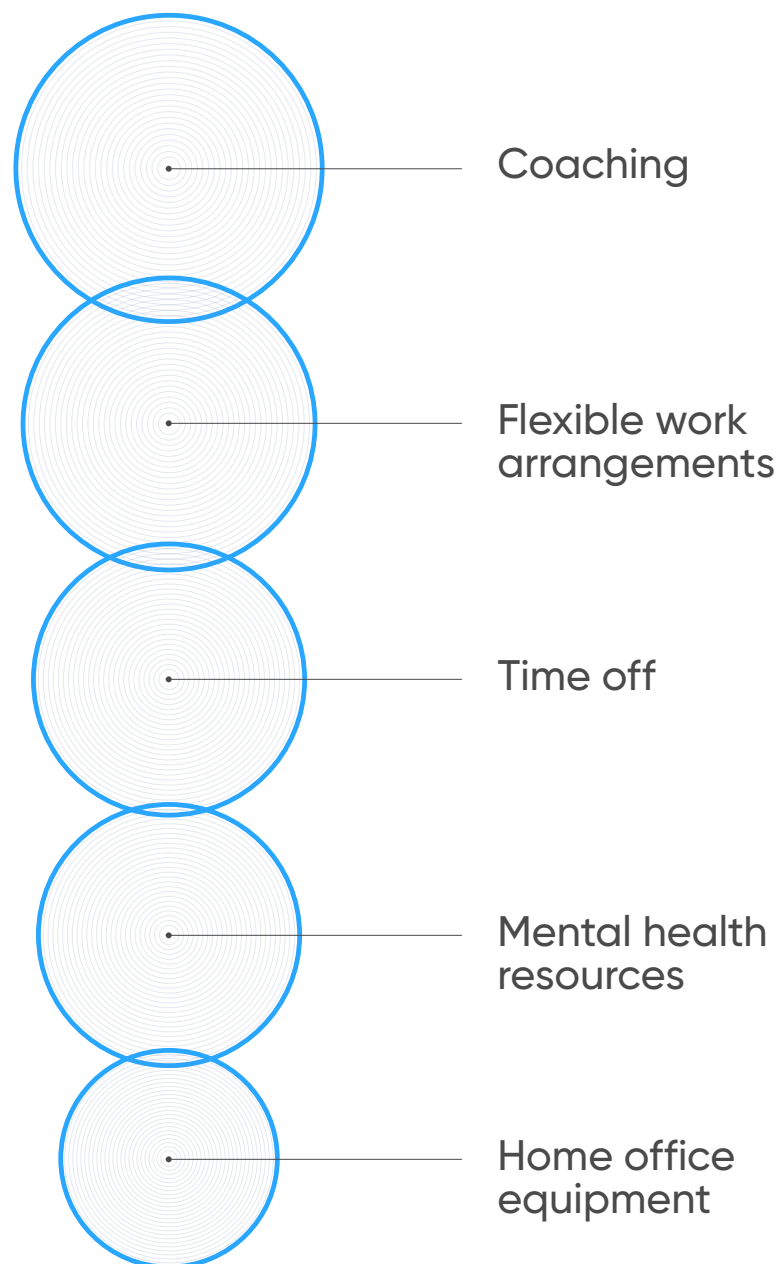
Over the past decade, companies have broadened their wellbeing approaches to go beyond mental health, introducing benefits such as fitness, nutrition, mindfulness, and financial coaching. Now is not the time to pull back on those efforts, but rather to lean in even more to address the heightened stress, anxiety, and loneliness brought on by the pandemic.

The current pandemic is creating an imperative for organizations to offer support at all levels as the psychological impacts of ongoing uncertainty continue to permeate across the workforce—from individual contributors to executives. However, it's important to consider that the support needed now likely looks very different than pre-pandemic times. Organizations may find that they need a heavier emphasis on providing holistic care and support that crosses work and life boundaries, all via virtual channels.

When you consider that resilience helps protect individuals against the worst effects of adversity, building support systems for employees is a smart investment. As our research indicates, employees thrive when they feel their organization is supporting them. Employees with high-perceived organizational support experience 21% greater growth on RiX within 3–4 months compared to their colleagues who don't believe their company cares about their wellbeing.

Data from over 6,000 Members provide insight to the organizational actions or offerings that employees are perceiving to be the most helpful during the pandemic. The support, strategic partnership, and psychological safety inherent in a coaching relationship are valued even above flexible work arrangements or even additional time off. Employees don't just need more time to navigate these changes, they need coaching to discover how to navigate them.

| The highest valued organizational offerings during the pandemic:



To prepare for the longer-term impacts of ongoing uncertainty, evaluate your wellbeing benefits and talent development programs to identify gaps in supporting physical, social, and emotional wellbeing. Pulse your organization to get rich insights on why they might not be leveraging existing resources, like your Employee Assistance Programs, and what kind of support is missing. Even organizations in industries that are faring well during the pandemic need to consider the long-term impacts of ongoing change and uncertainty on their workforce.

Foster a culture of resilience through your leaders

In most organizations, frontline managers have a disproportionate impact on culture and engagement. Resilient leaders create the pathway to higher team agility and performance, and reduced burnout and turnover intentions. By boosting leadership resilience alone, you can amplify the impact of your development investments. When you layer in additional leadership skills that drive engagement and performance, such as driving alignment to strategic goals, promoting inclusion, and delivering coaching and feedback, your leaders will become an even more powerful force in your business.

On the flip side, consider the cost of not investing in leaders. Just as resilient leaders can create a multiplier effect, their less-resilient counterparts can negatively shift morale. Stress, catastrophization, fear of failure, and disengagement in leaders can create suboptimal conditions that are detrimental to human performance. Our data shows that team members reporting to low-resilient leaders have elevated levels of burnout and turnover intentions.

Our studies also suggest that leaders may be struggling to provide support during a crisis. Through the start of the pandemic, individual contributors reported feeling the least amount of social support at work from managers and supervisors. This isn't at all surprising given that managers are experiencing unprecedented levels of adversity for the first time as well. Organizations that want to thrive through crisis must reevaluate their leadership development efforts. Creating greater focus on building leadership resilience can help organizations capitalize on the permeating effects of leaders on their teams.





Model after the profile of high resilience

As we've shown in our research, the differentiating characteristics of the highly resilient are uniquely human capabilities, including the ability to collaborate, influence, and communicate, a continuous focus on personal growth, and a commitment to proactive stress management. As many organizations set out to reskill their workforce with various technical and job-related professional skills, resilience is perhaps even more central to success. Shifting focus to a mindset of continuous growth rather than a specific set of new job skills will have longer-term value and impact as individuals learn to be agile, pivoting their learning to the most important knowledge and skills when they need it.

Organizations can leverage the profile of high resilience across recruiting, development efforts, and continuous performance management. Knowing that resilient individuals will have outsized performance, the profile provides a suggested set of capabilities to look for when recruiting new talent. Then, assess your learning portfolio to identify if and how these capabilities are being developed. In your continuous performance management efforts, find ways to provide feedback and coaching on these capabilities, especially to team leaders. And across all these efforts, recognize and reward the role models of high resilience.

Make change personal

While our research and experience coaching thousands of BetterUp Members reveals a clear framework for developing resilience, change is a highly-individualized experience. Every individual starts with a unique level of resilience, as well as differing levels of proficiency in the mindsets and behaviors that drive it. Increasing self-awareness is almost always a necessary first step to fuel readiness to try new approaches and change behaviors. Each individual will also grow at different rates, which further drives the need for personalization.

Tailoring growth and learning is important for effectiveness. When it comes to building human capabilities like resilience, a high level of vulnerability, sharing, and psychological safety is required to truly self-assess, recognize personal gaps, and spark personal growth. For this reason, integrating coaching into the previous generation of one-size-fits-all development strategies has gained traction over the past few years. In a controlled outcomes study conducted with a technology organization, we found that learning programs offered with personalized coaching are significantly more effective than learning programs without coaching attached.

For example, we found 32% higher growth in emotional regulation, 23% reduction in burnout, and 15% improvement in resilience for those who were coached as part of their learning experience. These outcomes clearly show not only the effectiveness of adding a human-to-human component to learning efforts but also the business case for driving an increased return on your existing investments.

The shift for many organizations to fully-remote or hybrid-remote arrangements comes with the opportunity to reevaluate many ways of operation, to include the mode and format by which you are offering personal development support and learning. The emergence of scalable coaching offers a viable option for companies to provide the level of personalization, practice, and reinforcement that is necessary to make learning sticky and to do so at scale. Furthermore, increasing the level of access to such resources across the organization is a strong demonstration of responsiveness to current employee needs and the pervasive struggles of the current pandemic.

Take resilience out of the mystery box

The first step to building a more resilient workforce is to understand where your workforce stands today. Organizations must implement robust and repeated assessments to know who is effectively building their resilience and why other populations might be falling behind. Do you currently have a lens into the changing levels of stress or productivity disruption across functions, roles, or career stages? Effectively tracking these factors can help organizations learn how to best support their people and when.

For example, we know from our research that individuals undergoing a major job change are 19% lower in effective stress management during that time. This suggests a need for greater organizational support for those going through role changes as it is a critical time where stress can become overwhelming.

BetterUp's RiX is one example of a strong, non-invasive, repeatable measure that offers organizations a picture of change over time in resilience and associated mindsets and behaviors. When evaluating measurement approaches, look for measures that capture data from multiple sources, including managers, direct reports, and even coaches to understand how individuals are doing, growing, and demonstrating their development to others over time. With a measurement strategy in place, your organization can chart a plan to success and ongoing visibility to your progress.





Final Thoughts

Organizations that optimize for human growth will outperform in all aspects of business, culture, and employee experience.

People need support. And the need is right now. When the challenges and context are unknown, the resilience of your people to withstand setbacks, pivots, and changes that require constant agility and adaptability becomes paramount to success. Resilience is the foundational capability to accelerate individual, team, and organizational success in the 21st century.

Through a vast collection of data representing employees, teams, and organizations, our research illuminates the factors that differentiate high resilience and how it can have profound cascading effects on teams. For those who need additional support to build it, we outline a clear roadmap to develop resilience, and do so at scale. Organizations must now take action and do it swiftly before the next waves of disruption arrive.

Resilience is a powerful preventative strategy that will increase your organization's endurance through the uncertain times ahead of us. Beyond just surviving future disruption, companies that learn how to thrive through crisis will emerge as winners. The level of resiliency in your organization serves as a strong leading indicator of this competitive advantage.

While the business benefits are clear, the greatest advantage for organizations that truly believe in the value of resilience is reaping the benefits of a culture that promotes wellbeing, human development, and a more meaningful life for every employee.

Methodology

Methods

This report was developed using data from three different datasets and a number of associated studies, all collected and conducted by BetterUp, Inc.



Study 1: BetterUp Members

Sample

The first dataset was compiled from thousands of BetterUp Members who granted approval to use their data for research purposes. In accordance with corporate security and privacy policies, no identifying information, nor demographic information, was compiled. Data were collected from July 2019 through June 2020 and partitioned to look at particular time periods of interest, such as when the COVID-19 pandemic started.

Survey Items

The cohort was surveyed on a variety of items that compose BetterUp's Whole Person Assessment (WPA). At its core, WPA is centered on the themes of (a) Thriving as individuals, and (b) Inspiring as a leader, which we refer to Thriving and Inspiring, respectively, as well as mindsets that enable self-insight and growth.

The WPA was developed and validated using a multi-phased approach. Initial sub-dimensions and associated items were developed using related measures from the literature, prior BetterUp assessments, and interviews with stakeholders. The full set of items was validated using a large sample of working professionals (N = 1,030). The psychometric properties of the assessment and individual items were examined through a combination of classical test theory and hierarchical factor analysis. We also examined the discriminant and convergent validity of the resulting item sets against a set of measures previously validated in the academic/peer-reviewed literature, and we assessed reliability over time by conducting two test-retest studies.

Surveys were administered to Members when they first started using BetterUp services, after each coaching session, and approximately every 3–6 months thereafter. Members also participated in 360 assessments in which the Member's colleagues, direct reports, and supervisors were surveyed about their perception of the Member's behaviors on select subdimensions of the WPA, as well as additional measures of individual and team effectiveness.

The following surveys or questions were used in the current report:

Professional characteristics: Members were asked about their job role, professional activities and events, and interests in professional coaching.

WPA subdimensions: Members responded to items that assessed the following 16 WPA subdimensions: resilience, stress management, purpose and meaning, turnover intentions, job performance, job productivity, growth mindset, social connection, empathy, cognitive agility, strategic planning, physical activity, rest, empowerment, problem-solving, and encouraging participation.

Team-based assessment: Respondents who completed the 360 assessments evaluated their work teams on aspects of team performance, agility, engagement, and innovation.

Post-coaching session assessment: After each BetterUp one-on-one virtual coaching session, each Member had the option to complete a voluntary short survey. Members were asked to evaluate their general wellbeing, as well as evaluate the impact and benefits of their coaching experience. Additionally, following each coaching session, the coach would identify topics that were covered in their coaching sessions.

Study 2: Longitudinal study of U.S. professionals

Sample

The second dataset was drawn from a survey completed by 1,219 Amazon Mechanical Turk workers prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (between February 3–9, 2020). A follow-up survey was completed by 640 individuals who completed the original survey. This second survey was completed after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (between April 3–7, 2020). Participants who met the following criteria were included in the final study: (1) At least 18 years old, worked full time (at least 35 hours per week); (2) Currently employed, or employed within the past six months; (3) Not self-employed; (4) Earning a personal annual income of at least USD \$25,000. In the case of having been employed within the past six months, but not currently employed, respondents were asked to answer questions as they related to their most recent employment. All survey respondents provided consent to participate in the study and have their data used for research purposes.

Survey Items

This set of participants was surveyed on a variety of items that included personal and professional demographics, psychological characteristics, and behaviors. The following surveys or questions were used in the current report:

Demographics and professional characteristics: Survey items related to demographics, work experiences, and current circumstances were largely adapted from open data resources provided by the United States Census, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Rand American Life Panel. These items included, but were not limited to, measures of gender, education, race, industry, job function, organizational tenure, and team size.

Professional development: Participants were asked a series of questions about their current and desired professional development activities. This included items about formal and informal training, time spent on professional development activities, and previous or current experience with professional coaching.

Resilience: Resilience was measured using a 3-item scale from the WPA described in Study 1. This WPA subdimension measures the extent to which individuals positively adapt in the context of negative or stressful experiences.

Job productivity: Work productivity was measured using a single item, on a 0 to 10 scale, that evaluated how productive participants had been at work recently. This item was also taken from the WPA, described under Study 1.

Meaning and purpose: Feelings of meaning and purpose were measured with three items from the WPA described in Study 1. This WPA subdimension assesses the extent to which we experience a sense of personal meaning associated with what we do at work.

Wellbeing: General wellbeing was measured using the Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale⁷, a 7-item scale that assesses psychological and social wellbeing (Fat et al., 2017). Physical activity and sleep-related behaviors were each measured using four items. Physical activity was measured using three items from the WPA that measured the extent to which we engage in enjoyable physical activity and one that directly asked about the amount of physical activity. Similarly, sleep behavior was measured using three items from the WPA that evaluated the extent to which we engage in good sleep hygiene and one that required recording the average number of hours slept in a night. Social connection and support were evaluated using three items from the WPA that assessed the extent to which we remain close and engaged with important, supportive people in our lives and another item that delineated the amount of social support from family, friends, work peers, supervisors, and senior work leaders.

Innovation: Individual innovation was measured using a 7-item scale of creativity in the workplace. Items were adapted from a 9-item measure of creative work involvement, as described by Carmeli & Schoebrouck, 2007. Team creative processes were measured using a 6-item scale as adapted by Gilson and Shalley, 2004.

Cognitive flexibility: The Cognitive Flexibility Scale, a 12-item scale, was used to assess participants ability to switch between different thoughts and actions. The scale was used according to Martin and Rubin, 1995.

Perspective-taking: A 4-item scale was used to assess the extent to which participants take others' perspectives at work. The adapted version of this scale was used, as described in Grant and Berry, 2011.

⁷ Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) © NHS Health Scotland, University of Warwick and University of Edinburgh, 2008, all rights reserved.

Study 3: Large-scale benchmarking of U.S. professionals

Sample

The third survey was completed by 17,500 working professionals between May and June 2019. Participants' professional profiles spanned 18 industries (e.g., Pharma/Biotech, Healthcare, and Energy), nine job functions (e.g., Research & Development, Marketing, and Engineering), and a range of company sizes. The survey was completed on the Qualtrics platform using Qualtrics recruitment services.

This study generated a representative sample of the working population across demographic groups, leader levels, field and central office settings, remote and non-remote working locations, and employee tenures. It also captured contextual information such as whether the organization has been part of a merger or acquisition in the past 12 months, and relevant aspects of company culture (e.g., purpose-driven, rapid change).

This study population and associated data was primarily used to develop and validate the Resilience Innovation Index (RiX), along with BetterUp Member data from Study 1.

Survey Items

This group of survey participants was also asked to complete the WPA, along with a series of personal and professional demographics and characteristics. The following surveys or questions were used in the current report:

Demographics and professional characteristics: Survey items included, but were not limited to, gender, education, race, other demographics, industry, job function, work experiences, organizational tenure, team size, and job responsibilities.

Professional development: Participants were asked a series of questions about their current and desired professional development activities. This included items about formal and informal training, time spent on professional development activities, previous or current experience with professional coaching, and motivations to engage in professional coaching, as well as potential topics to focus on with a professional coach.

Analyses

Results

Data were analyzed by researchers at BetterUp, Inc. Descriptive and inferential analyses were applied to the entire sample, as well as to subgroups. Subgroup analyses assessed differences between demographic profiles (e.g., age, education), employment circumstances (e.g., managers vs. individual contributors, industry), and behavioral differences (e.g., high vs. low resilience). Significance testing was used to determine whether group differences were statistically significant (at the $p < .05$ level). All results submitted to significant testing are significant under this definition, otherwise they were not included. Correlation and regression analyses were used to examine relationships between variables and determine direction of relationships.

High and low levels of resilience

Some findings report the differences between employees who score high in their ratings of how much resilience they feel, compared to employees with average or low scores on this measure. References to high and low scores on resilience refer to the discretization of a continuous measurement of resilience into quantile brackets. High (low) resilience brackets refer to the top (bottom) 20–25% of resilience scores.

Quasi-experimental design

Select analyses were conducted to directly compare individuals who did receive one-on-one coaching to those who did not receive one-on-one coaching prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and again after the pandemic was officially declared. These analyses were not part of a prospective study, but rather the two groups were a subset of participants described in Study 1 and Study 2, respectively. To conduct these analyses, the two groups (coached and non-coached) were matched on key characteristics such as a common set of survey measures and timing of when surveys were completed before and after the pandemic. This quasi-experimental design allowed us to compare different datasets on a common set of variables, even if this comparison was not planned when the data were originally collected.

Financial analyses

To understand the financial impacts of resilience, two methods were used.

The first method estimated the individual differences in self-reported annual salary between individuals with differing levels of resilience derived from the longitudinal study cohort of 1,219 professionals.

Second, in estimating the impact of differing levels of resilience on organizational level metrics, we collected company-level financial performance metrics for 22 BetterUp partner organizations with publicly available financial information, representing approximately 1,500 individuals. The following company-level metrics were collected (reported as percentages): annual return on equity, annual return on assets, annual year-over-year revenue growth, and five-year revenue growth. We then examined the association between these financial metrics for fiscal year 2019 and resilience scores, as well as growth in resilience, from 1,446 individual BetterUp Members from the 22 organizations.

Resilience Innovation Index

The development of the Resilience Innovation Index (RiX) drew on select subdimensions from the WPM, as described in Study 1, and was based on several criteria. These included minimizing completion time, applicability for individual and organizational insights, theoretical and empirical relationship to existing literature, as well as a strong relationship with key measures of workplace resilience and innovation, to include job performance, team agility, and team innovation.

To confirm that the index included the appropriate WPM subdimensions, we conducted a series of multivariate regressions to confirm that the composite index was significantly correlated with workplace outcomes. Further, to confirm that the index generates a reliable measure we conducted a series of analyses to identify a reliable item composite and the final scale showed excellent internal consistency reliability of 0.91. Finally, we assessed the incremental validity of the full index relative to simply measuring resilience and found that all components of the RiX together were more strongly related to productivity and job performance than resilience alone, demonstrating the added value of measuring the full index.

Limitations

1. Sampling

The participant sampling method employed in Study 1 and Study 2 does not attempt to account for sample characteristics which may be unrepresentative of the actual makeup of the United States workforce. In some cases, sample demographics were reasonably reflective of the broader U.S. population (e.g., gender, education, and income), but this was not true for all variables (e.g., racial/ethnic composition was mostly White/Caucasian). Caution should be exercised when using the findings in this report to make confident inferences about the U.S. workforce at large. Future iterations of this research can improve external validity by employing weighting schemas and adaptive inclusion criteria to better approximate the true population of the U.S. workforce.

2. Cause and effect

This research used observational data, meaning there was no randomization or experimental manipulation of the variables measured, except as described next, in the quasi-experimental design, below. As such, the relationship between any two variables is just that—a relationship. It remains undetermined as to whether a change in one variable actually caused the change in another. The findings in this report may, however, be used as preliminary indicators to determine which variables may be worth manipulating experimentally to establish true causal relationships.

3. Financial projections

The impact of resilience on self-reported annual salary, frequency of promotions, and organizational-level financial performance are correlational measures with undetermined understanding of any directional relationship.

In particular, in collecting data to understand organizational-level resilience, the assessments to gather the data on resilience were collected from July 2019 to May 2020 while the financial data reflected each company's fiscal year 2019 performance. Since the time periods were not completely aligned, the results indicate a relationship, but do not indicate directionality of that relationship. The specific impact on reported organization-level financial metrics should be interpreted as projections with a considerable margin of error. Actual outcomes may vary widely, due to a shift in company economics every quarter, company size, industrial sector, existing resilience levels across the workforce, or number of individuals in a company who have the opportunity to grow their resilience.

About BetterUp

Founded in 2013, BetterUp is the global leader in mobile-based, professional coaching. BetterUp's personalized and scalable leadership development platform brings together a unique combination of expert coaches and behavioral science to offer a new way to develop talent to experience personal and professional growth. With a network of over 2,000 coaches, BetterUp offers 1:1 coaching at scale in 30 languages across 62 countries, along with interactive professional development content, analytics and insights to monitor the progress that employees are making. Used by leading Fortune 1000 companies, BetterUp drives transformational and lasting behavior change, resulting in improved business outcomes across organizations and inspires professionals everywhere to pursue their lives with greater clarity, purpose, and passion.

To learn more, visit www.betterup.com





About the authors



Alexis Jeannotte

Dr. Alexis Jeannotte currently serves as a Senior Cognitive Scientist at BetterUp, conducting research to better understand and boost employee performance and wellbeing. Prior to joining BetterUp, Alexis developed and managed a portfolio of research programs at the U.S. Government's Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA). Here, her research interests included applied research to enhance cognitive performance, use of mobile technology for behavioral and social sciences, as well as novel measures of trust, cooperation, and influence.

She was awarded the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers for her work. Her research has been featured in several journals and the popular media, to include Scientific American Mind, Fast Company, Nature Communications, Trends in Cognitive Science, and IEEE. She has also been an invited speaker at forums sponsored by NIH, FDA, IEEE, and the Mayo Clinic. Dr. Jeannotte earned her PhD. in Neuroscience from Georgetown University.



Erin Eatough

Dr. Erin Eatough is an occupational health psychologist who has expertise in the promotion of employee and leader wellbeing. Erin is particularly interested in the science of stress and its effects on health and performance at work. Her research has been published in outlets such as the Journal of Applied Psychology, the Journal of Organizational Behavior, and the Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, and has been featured in media outlets such as Harvard Business Review.

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Her writing and research has been featured in The Atlantic Online, Inc., JAMA, CNBC, Harvard Business Review, and Scientific American Mind. Her work on behavior change and flourishing spans the fields of neuroscience, psychiatry, psychology, neurology, economics, and public health.

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